

Applicant: Bernalillo County Zoning, Building, Planning, and Environmental Health Department

Agent: N/A

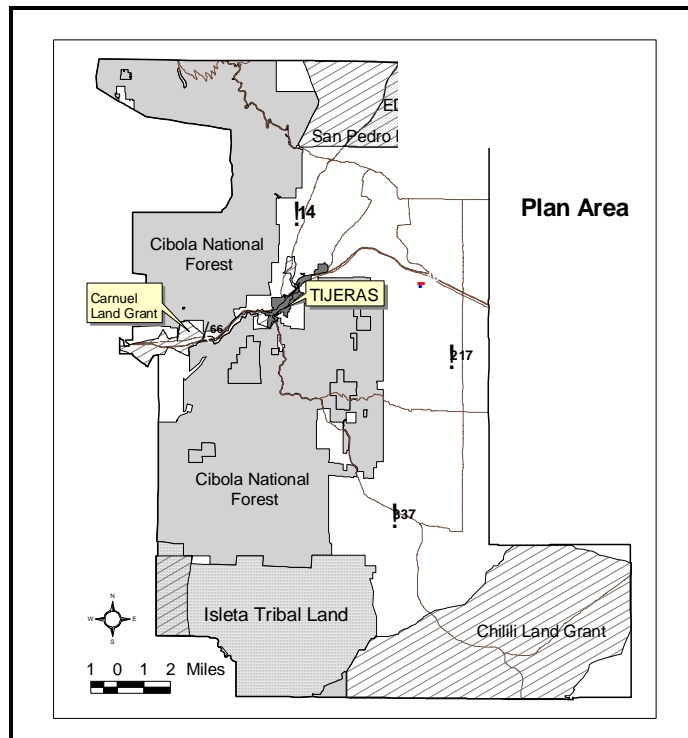
Location: East Mountain Area

Property Size: N/A

Existing Zone: N/A

Request: Adoption of the draft East Mountain Area Plan

Recommendation: Approval



Summary: This is a request for the adoption of the East Mountain Area Plan (2005). This plan serves as an update to the current East Mountain Area Plan which was adopted in 1992.

This plan review was continued from the January 11, 2006 CPC hearing to allow for substantive changes made by the CPC to be incorporate into the document.

Staff Planner: Mari Simbaña, Program Planner

Attachments:

1. Application
2. Plan Area Map
3. Summary from Bernalillo County Hydrologist
4. Letters from Neighbors
5. Public Meeting Agenda (October 20, 2005)
6. Additional Suggested Changes from Neighbors (11/14/05 Draft)
7. Additional Suggested Changes from Neighbors (2/27/06 Draft)
8. East Mountain Area Plan February Draft (Commissioners Only)

Bernalillo County Departments and other agencies reviewed this application from 5/23/05 to 3/22/06. Their comments were used in preparation of this report, and begin on Page 8.

AGENDA ITEM NO.: 4
County Planning Commission
April 5, 2006

SPR-50006

Zoning, Building, Planning & Environmental Health Department requests approval of the draft East Mountain Area Plan. This plan serves as an update to the 1992 East Mountain Area Plan. Section I contains a summary of the plan and process. Section II is an introduction to the purpose of planning and presents the updated and revised Goals for the East Mountain area. In addition, there is a Community Vision subsection which contains the vision and main goals created by the community. Section IV contains the land use policies. (CONTINUED FROM THE JANUARY 11, 2006 HEARING)

AREA CHARACTERISTICS AND ZONING HISTORY
Surrounding Zoning & Land Uses

Site	Zoning	Land use
	A-2	East Mountain Area
North		Sandoval County
South		Torrance County
East		Torrance County Santa Fe County
West		City of Albuquerque

THE REQUEST:

The East Mountain Area Plan includes updated information on the physical, social, and environmental factors of the East Mountain Area, as well as goals and policies to meet current needs of the East Mountain Area.

This plan is a revision of the East Mountain Area Plan originally adopted by the Bernalillo County Commission on May 6, 1975 and amended June 19, 1979. It was updated again in 1992. The purpose of the original plan was to establish guidelines by which to carry out the land use goals for the East Mountain Area. As in the original plan, the updated plan presents the existing physical and environmental conditions; historical and projected population trends; and industrial, commercial, and residential development trends. The historical and existing conditions for the area provide a framework for the plan's evaluation of existing County policies and regulations relative to the community's goals and vision.

The East Mountain Area encompasses approximately 321 square miles (210,000 acres) of eastern Bernalillo County. Two perpendicular routes bisected the study area. I-40 extends east-west across the area, providing the primary connection from the East Mountain Area to the City of Albuquerque through Tijeras Canyon, and the area's major north-south roadway, State Highway 14 north of I-40 and State Highway 337 (formerly South 14) south of I-40.

The area has developed around the Sandia, Manzanita, and Manzano mountain ranges, owned and managed by the National Forest Service. The mountains provide the area with scenic beauty, wildlife habitat areas, and diverse recreational opportunities.

The entire study area was included for data collection and analysis purposes. The area contains sub-areas that have distinct and different characteristics from one another. However, based upon these data and analyses, it is recognized that those areas west of the crest of the Sandia Mountains and north of I-40, including Sandia Heights, are excluded from all implementation recommendations and policies contained in this plan. The areas west of the crest are included in, and relate to, planning efforts existing and under consideration for the foothills adjacent to the City of Albuquerque. Although Carnuel and La Merced del Pueblo de Chilili land grants fall within the East Mountain geographic planning area, implementation, recommendations and policies of this plan do not apply to these grants. In addition, the Isleta Indian Reservation has been included in this plan's boundaries, but the policies of this plan do not apply there. All policies proposed in this plan do apply to all other areas east of the Sandia Crest, Manzanita Mountains and Manzano Mountains within Bernalillo County.

Through the initiative of Commissioner Brasher, Bernalillo County staff began working formally with the East Mountain Area Community in July 2003 to update the East Mountain Area Plan. Since that time, East Mountain Area residents have shown their dedicated participation in the process. A planning meeting was held almost every month for a year. Residents were involved with a community survey, volunteer committee activities, and participation in public meetings.

Surrounding Land Uses and Zoning

The East Mountain Area encompasses approximately 210,000 acres of eastern Bernalillo County including the Sandia, Manzanita, and Manzano mountain ranges. The mountains, owned and managed by the National Forest Service, provide the area with scenic beauty, wildlife habitat, and diverse recreational opportunities. These characteristics along with quietness, low-population density, limited vehicle traffic, and neighborhood-scale businesses define the rural character of the area. North of the East Mountain Area is Sandoval County, east are Santa Fe and Torrance counties, and south is Torrance County.

APPLICABLE PLANS AND POLICIES: Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan

B. Land Use

Policy 1 The states Goal of Open Space Network is to provide visual relief from urbanization and to offer opportunities for education, recreation, cultural activities, and conservation of natural resources by setting aside Major Public Open Space, parks, trails corridors, and open areas throughout the Comprehensive Plan Area.

Policy 3 The stated Goal of the Rural Area is, “to maintain the separate identity of Rural Areas as alternatives to urbanization by guiding development compatible with their open character, natural resources, and traditional settlement patterns.” The following are applicable policies:

Policy 3.a. of the Rural Area Goal states that, “Rural Areas shown by a Plan map shall generally retain their rural character with development consisting primarily of ranches, farms, and single-family homes on large lots; higher density development may occur at appropriate locations – within rural villages or planned communities. Overall gross densities shall not exceed one dwelling unit per acre. Rural Area density patterns shall be more specifically defined through lower rank planning.”

Policy 3.b states that, “Development in Rural Areas shall be compatible with natural resource capacities, including water availability and capacity, community and regional goals and shall include trail corridors where appropriate.”

Policy 3.f States that, “Development shall be carefully controlled in the East Mountain Area to prevent environmental deterioration, and to be compatible with the resource base and natural recreational and scenic assets.”

Policy 3.g states that “the following shall guide industrial and commercial development in the Rural Areas.”

- “Small-scale, local industries, which employ few people and may sell products on the same premises, are the most desirable industrial use.”
- “Neighborhood and/or community-scale rather than regional scale commercial centers are appropriate for rural areas. Strip commercial development should be discouraged and,

instead, commercial development should be clustered at major intersections and within designated mountain and valley villages.”

C. Environmental Protection and Heritage Conservation

Policy 2 The stated Water Quality goal is to maintain a dependable, quality supply of water for the area’s urbanized needs.

Policy 2.a Minimize the potential for contaminants to enter the community water supply.

Policy 2.b Water quality degradation resulting from on-site liquid waste disposal systems shall be minimized.

Policy 2.c Water quality contamination resulting from solid waste disposal shall be minimized.

Policy 2.d Water quality management plans shall be coordinated to assure Bernalillo County’s citizens receive adequate water quantity and quality that meets essential needs.

Policy 3 The stated Goal for Solid Waste is an economical and environmentally sound method of solid waste disposal which utilizes the energy content and material value of municipal solid waste.

Policy 6 The stated Goal of Archeological Resources is to identify and manage or acquire significant archeological and paleontological sites for research, education, economic, and/or recreation use.

D. Community Resource Management

Policy 2 The stated Water Management goal is efficient water management and use.

Policy 2.a. Measures shall be adopted to discourage wasteful water use, such as extensive landscape-water runoff to cultivated areas.

Policy 2.b Maximum absorption of precipitation shall be encouraged through retention of natural arroyos and other means of runoff conservation within the context of overall water resource management.

Policy 2.c Existing water rights shall be protected and new rights if necessary to accommodate increasing population needs.

Policy 5 The stated Goal of Housing is to increase the supply of affordable housing; conserve and improve the quality of housing; ameliorate the problems of homelessness, overcrowding, and displacement of low income residents; and assure against discrimination in the provision of housing.

Policy 6 Economic Development goal is, “to achieve steady and diversified economic development balanced with other important social, cultural, and environmental goals.”

Policy 6.a states that, “New Employment opportunities which will accommodate a wide range of occupational skills and salary levels shall be encouraged and new jobs located convenient to the areas of most need.”

Policy 6.b states that, “Development of local business enterprises as well as the recruitment of the outside firms shall be emphasized.”

Policy 6.g states that Concentrations of employment and Activity Centers should be promoted in an effort to balance jobs with housing and population and reduce the need to travel.

Additional Comments, August 31, 2005

Water data has been added to the Natural Resources section of the plan.

The water data was prepared by John Shomaker and Associates, Inc., water resources consultants. The data was reviewed by Bernalillo County hydrologist, Dan McGregor, who explains that,

“This update, compared to the 1992 plan, contains a much more extensive description of the geologic setting and provides an estimate of precipitation based on elevation distribution within the East Mountain Area. The resulting precipitation distribution is then used to estimate the total recharge of the aquifer systems using “Maxey-Eakin” coefficients as described by Maxey and Eakin (1949)./ Based on this approach, about 37,200 ac-ft/yr was estimated to represent possible average recharge for the entire East Mountain Area, or about 14 percent of the average annual precipitation. This value contains a high degree of uncertainty due to limited data points, but does represent a possible upper limit on the average amount of water entering the aquifers each year. No such estimate was provided in the 1992 plan. However, because of the complex groundwater-flow system in the East Mountain Area, a thorough and detailed recharge estimation is not possible within the scope of this plan./ The update also provides a calculation of the range of minimum sustainable lot sizes based on the range of possible assumptions for variable hydrogeologic conditions. In general, the update provides a much stronger quantification of area-wide conditions, which was not provided in the 1992 plan, and provides a summary level discussion of the distribution of these conditions./ In short, the existing knowledge base developed to date through cooperative monitoring within the East Mountain Area is sufficient only for rough bounding estimates of precipitation and approximation of recharge for the area as a whole. However, these are rough estimates only, represent a high degree of uncertainty, and do not address distribution of recharge to specific areas, flow pathways within the aquifer, or provide a sufficient basis to draw implications regarding site-specific conditions. While the estimates provide some rough bounds for the broader perspective of area planning, the knowledge base but must be extensively expanded to support sector level or overlay planning.”

Additional Staff Comments, January 11, 2006

Following the recommendation of CPC at the July 6, 2005 hearing, staff held a public meeting on October 20, 2005. Meeting participants voiced their concerns about the importance of preserving rural character, cluster development, ridge top protection, acquisition of National Forest Lands for open space, annexation issues, and hydrology. Subsequent to the public meeting, staff proceeded to make revisions to the draft East Mountain Area Plan. Following that, the East Mountain Coalition of Neighborhood and Landowner Associations submitted additional changes particularly to the goals, objectives, policies, and techniques. Many of these changes as well as grammatical corrections were implemented.

Additional Staff Comments, April 5, 2006

At the January 11, 2006 hearing, the County Planning Commission voted on the following substantive changes:

- Deletion of language forcing land owners to dedicate 20% Open Space in Policy 2.3;
- Deletion of the 2nd clause from Policy 15.1, placing a penalty on littering;
- Deletion of Policy 1.9, as A-1 and A-2 zoning already regulates agricultural uses;
- Deletion of mobile home objective (p.123), as this is satisfied by current M-H zoning;
- Revision Policy 3.4 to be more specific; and
- Addition of *Edgewood Soil and Water Conservation Service* to Policy 7.6.

The draft showing the tracked changes was posted on the Bernalillo County website and printed for members of the public who requested copies of the draft. Items for continued discussion include cluster development and ridgetop protection.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approval based on the following Findings.

Mari Simbaña
Program Planner

Findings:

1. The request is for the adoption of the draft East Mountain Area Plan. This Plan is an update of the 1992 East Mountain Area Plan.
2. The property is within the Rural Area as designated by the Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan.
3. The East Mountain Area Plan is consistent with many goals of the Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan that call for the establishment of trails, bikeways, an open space network, and preserves the rural character of the area.
4. This request is consistent with the health, safety, and general welfare of the residents of the County.

BERNALILLO COUNTY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

Building Department:

No adverse comments from Zoning at this time.

Based on the above comments there is no adverse comments at this time.

Environmental Health:

No comment received

Zoning Administrator:

No adverse comments

Fire:

No comment received

Public Works:

DRAN:

No comment received

DRE:

On page 12, under "Policies Overview", change the word "gravel" to "surface" in the fourth statement, such that it reads, "Bernalillo County Public Works Department shall pursue methods to surface and maintain all appropriate high traffic roadways in the East Mountain Area to reduce dust and air pollution."

Parks & Recreation:

BCPR commends ZBP staff for their diligent work on the East Mountain Area Plan and in their efforts to coordinate approaches and strategies found in the approved East Mountain Trails and Bikeways Master Plan and the County Parks, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan.

Some minor changes or additions:

? Top of page 11 - Policies Overview: Add a bullet that states "consider public acquisition of or other methods to preserve desirable open space properties and trail corridors."

? Bottom of page 17 - Original Plan: The bottom of the last paragraph has an incomplete sentence that reads "The Village of Tijeras has it's own?.."

? Page 19 - Bernalillo County Open Space: Second item should read "Secure long term funding (20+years) source for Bernalillo County Open Space

? Page 19, same section: Third item should read "Develop proactive acquisition and conservation strategies that promote the mission of BCOS."

COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

APRIL 5, 2006

SPR-50006

? Page 74, just before Dark Skies section or on page 96, Paving section: Add the following sentence "As Bernalillo County addresses fugitive dust issues on East Mountain dirt roads, opportunities for improving road ways (e.g. paving, striping, shoulder reinforcement) for better and safer trail and bikeway uses will be incorporated."

? Page 96, just before Paving section: Add a sentence at the end that reads "Bernalillo County Parks and Recreation Dept. and Bernalillo County Public Works Division shall coordinate on development review, road improvement efforts, funding budgeting, and other means toward implementing the East Mountain Trails and Bikeways Master Plan. The East Mountain Coalition of Neighborhood and Landowner Associations also has agreed to work with Bernalillo County on master plan implementation."

? Page 139 - Review and Evaluation: Under Facilities, please refer to the "Bernalillo County Parks, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan."

? Appendix - Please add the following definitions:

? Bikeway - Any road, path, or way in which some manner is specifically designated as being open to bicycle travel, regardless of whether such facilities are designated for the exclusive use of bicycles or are to be shared with other transportation modes.

? Trail - A separate pathway designated by signs for use by non-motorized traffic only, including pedestrians, bicyclists, equestrians, and people who use wheelchairs. Not all trails may accommodate all of these uses. Trails may be either paved or soft surface.

? Trail Corridor - A trail alignment or a proposed or future trail designated where right-of-way is not available or not defined

? Major Public Open Space - Major Public Open Space is an integrated system of lands and waters that have been designated either in the East Mountain Open Space Resource Management Plans, the City/County Comprehensive Plan, or the City/County Major Public Open Space Facility Plan.

Sheriff's:

No comment received

COMMENTS FROM OTHER AGENCIES

MRGCOG:

MRCOG encourages the County to participate in the upcoming development of the 2030 Metropolitan Transportation Plan. With the County's involvement, the community goals identified in this plan should provide input into the development of the underlying socioeconomic datasets and the generation of transportation alternatives to meet the needs of the traveling public in the east Mountains. Development of the 2030 MTP is expected to begin this summer and all agencies represented at the MRCOG will be contacted accordingly for their input.

AMAFCA:

No comment.

City Planning Department:

No comment received

City Public Works:

Transp. Planning:

Transp. Development: No adverse comments

Water Resources: N/A, No Comments

City Transit:

No comment received

ABCWUA Utility Development Section

No comment received

City Environmental Health:

No comment received

City Open Space:

No adverse comment.

NM Department of Transportation

No comments

Albuquerque Public School:

No comment received

Village of Tijeras:

No comment received

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS:

Acequia Madre de Carnuel
Buckboard
Canyon Estates
Crestview
East Mountains District 5 Coalition
Echo Canyon
Five Hills Area
Heatherland Hills Landowners
Hermosilla Estates
Horseshoe Valley Landowners
Juan Tomas Valley Landowners
Los Suenos
Lost Realm
Manzanita
Monticello
Neighbor's of Nichols Road
Ojo Grande Homeowners
Open Meadow Ranch
Ponderosa Pines
Ponderosa Ranch Estates Landowners
Rincon Loop
Riverfronte Estates
Sabino Canyon
Sandia Knolls
Sandia Mountain Ranch
Sandia Park Scenic Byway
Sedillo Road Greater Sierra Vista Estates
Sierra Vista South
Tablazon
Ventana Del Sol Homeowners
Vista Bonita
Vista de Manana
Wildflower
Woodlands Community